

Western Sydney Regional Community Care Forums

Jan-Jun 2026 Report



2026

Event Details

Western Sydney Community Forum hosted the Regional Community Care Forum and Regional Community Care Leaders Forum. The events were delivered in partnership with Gilgai Aboriginal Centre and focused on service delivery and policy, transition and reform for in-home aged care providers, and priorities for the disability advocacy sector. This report summarises the key themes and insights from these forums for the period January to June 2026.

The Regional Community Care Forum on 18 March 2026 was attended by frontline workers from Western Sydney's social and community services sector, and the Community Care Leaders Forum on 20 May 2026 was attended by government and community service leaders and representatives from Western Sydney's social and community services sector.

Both events provided a platform for providers delivering services and supports to older people and people with disability to consider priorities and solutions across the sector through collaboration, partnerships and networking with sector colleagues. These regular forums help to shape and inform social policy to more effectively support older people and people with disability in Western Sydney.



2026

Snapshot

The Community Care Forum and Community Care Leaders Forum provided an opportunity for frontline workers and organisational leaders to:

- Receive and share key information regarding in-home aged care service delivery and policy, and reform and transition;
- Identify areas for collaboration, and share strategies to strengthen service coordination and development for aged care and disability advocacy sectors;
- Raise and discuss emerging issues and priorities, and
- Connect with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing in relation to services and supports to people with disability and older people, their carers, and their families and friends.



Community Care Forum

94

Registered attendees from
Western Sydney, Nepean and
South Western Sydney



Community Care
Leaders Forum

86

Registered attendees from
Western Sydney, Nepean and
South Western Sydney



General feedback

96.5%

Percentage of attendees stating
that are **very likely** or **likely** to
use the information in their work



Value of sessions

82%

Percentage of attendees
stating that they are **very
likely** to recommend us for
this type of activity or service

Sector Priorities

Attendees identified several priorities for their organisations; there are shared themes across the two forums, which have largely remained consistent during this reform period.

Staff and resourcing for long term organisational sustainability and retention

Addressing gaps in service provision, including wrap-around care and specialised care services

Earlier intervention that works towards prevention and rehabilitation, to reduce wait times and demand for specialist services

Accessible resources and information for clients and providers, which is easy to understand and in language



Reform and Transition support needs

Staff and resourcing for long term organisational sustainability and retention

Service providers have expressed a need for greater investment and protections to their workforce, to ensure increased retention, higher quality of service, and better experiences for service providers. Reasons for high workforce turnover rates included verbal abuse and frustration from clients, and overwhelming demand for services. To ensure that safe and supportive services can be delivered for clients, especially those who are vulnerable, system reform needs to include protections for service providers and carers, as well as increased investment in service provision. This will help to promote sustainability within the workforce as well as its services, to meet the growing needs of the community.

Addressing gaps in service provision, including wrap-around care and specialised care services

Providers mentioned that differences in geography and demographic populations need to be taken into account when funding and reform decisions are made. Understanding the gaps in service provision across different local government areas, and how to create services to adequately fill these service gaps, is crucial in providing successful and meaningful care. This provision for local communities needs to also include accessible services such as specialist health care, food relief, and affordable and safe housing. An intersectional and holistic understanding of the realities of the costs and demand for services needs to be embedded throughout the policy reform process, including transport costs.

Earlier intervention that works towards prevention and rehabilitation, to reduce wait times and demand for specialist services

Providers raised the issue of extensive wait lists and times for services including occupational therapists, dementia care, and concessional beds. The current system and proposed reforms need to include preventative and rehabilitative strategies, to address the increasing complexity of needs when help or services are sought. This will aim to reduce wait times and reduce the likelihood of a client needing more intensive or longer periods of care.

Accessible resources and information for clients and providers, which is easy to understand and in language

Providers were vocal in their need for more information regarding the transition from CHSP to Support at Home, in order to prepare clients for the changes to services. Information needs to be accessible, in a range of languages, and easy for service providers to explain to clients. Providers highlighted that although there is a significant amount of information currently available, many of the resources are not provided in a wide enough range of languages. Service providers are also limited financially in their ability to access translated services in order to support older people in understanding My Aged Care, Commonwealth Home Support and the recent transition to Support at Home. There is therefore a need for accessible and translated information, or better supported access to translation services to ensure older people are able to understand the reforms, funding allocations, and other information relating to aged care services.

Focus areas of support

Participants identified three main focus areas of support that they feel would be useful for themselves, their organisation, and the broader industry:

- Community and stakeholder engagement
- Tools for developing and maintaining successful partnerships
- Cultural safety and responsiveness

Support and acknowledgements

These forums were delivered by Western Sydney Community Forum in partnership with Gilgai Aboriginal Centre, as part of a series of Community Care Forums for leaders and for staff in the aged care, disability and community care sectors.

Western Sydney Community Forum provides a range of services and supports for organisations in the human and community services industry. For ongoing support and information about the Commonwealth Home Support Program, Support at Home Program, aged care or disability advocacy, visit www.wscf.org.au.

Thank you to the Western Regional Team of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing; Carer Gateway; Western Sydney University; and to all the organisations in the region that provide support to older people and people with disability.





Sector Support

1 Networks and events

Community Care Forums and
Leadership Forums with
government and policy makers

2 Information and updates

Community Care News Digest
Reform and Transition News

3 Advisory services

Sector Support and
Advisory Service
Sector Support Web Portal

4 Training and development

Cultural Safety and
Responsiveness Workshops
Emerging Leaders Program
Training and development
initiatives and e-learning

5 Services on demand

Translation Services
Customised in-house
facilitation and training

6 Social policy initiatives

Provider consultations
Policy submissions
Information Clearinghouse

Contact us

Western Sydney Community Forum is the regional peak not for profit social development council.

We work with the community, business and government sectors towards inclusive and sustainable communities, now and for future generations.



Phone

02 9687 9669



Email

info@wscf.org.au



Address

Level 4, 169 Macquarie Street, Parramatta

Appendix A:

Consultation Feedback

Providers were asked a series of questions regarding their priorities and areas of support that would assist them in their work.

Responses have been themed and are recorded below in no particular order. Duplicates appear where more than one provider entered the same answer.

What are the current priorities and pressure points for your organisation?

Workforce Challenges

Financial sustainability
Staffing and skill shortage
Customer Relationship Management (CRM) integration systems and operations
New program delivery and marketing
Community engagement, outreach, referral to support services
Unable to meet the demand
Policies not aligned with ground realities
Helping unpaid carers access support
Increasing area of service provision and enhancing collaborative approach with other organisations
Staff retention
Sustainability
Sustainability
Sustainability
To get more staff, more volunteers; collaborating with more organisations to support community
Information
Provide solutions to the sector
Ageing services in the Blacktown LGA and beyond
Service linking

Staff and Client Preparedness for Reform

Registering for Support at Home (SAH) as an associated provider
Being able to continue providing Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services to clients with the SSSV code pencilled in for discontinuation June 30th 2026
CHSP clarity and planning
CHSP transition to SAH: what this means to participants; what are the gaps; continuity of supports
Looking forward to knowing more about the future of CHSP - especially the Group-Based Programs
Making people understand the complex funding landscape
To help elderly get interim funding or put cases on urgent priority for their funding to come in
To inform providers and older people are about the Aged Care reform
To link clients with CHSP approved services; to link with My Aged Care for needed services
Understanding Support at Home
Understanding the new system to support our clients
SAH hours utilisation
Restorative Care rollout
Package upgrades
Compliance - ongoing under Act
Client[s] are unable to pay the co-contribution on SAH, client is not using service; client living with cluttering environments, affected in their health issues
To cut the contribution in SaH for everyday living

Funding

- Funding
- Funding
- Funding
- Funding
- Funding

Provision of Quality Care and Services

- Access to more CHSP providers with service availability
- Cost of living support
- Transportation additional support
- Increased food vouchers
- Create awareness
- Give people with physical or psychosocial disability a sense of community and independence
- Dementia care and education
- Increased foot traffic due to cost-of-living pressures
- Housing people that are either homeless or at risk of homelessness - identifying their complex concerns and working with them to ensure long term tenancies
- Reach out to maximum participants who need support under NDIS and SAH funding; this can be directly or through other providers
- Building stronger relationships in the community
- Resourcing
- Service delivery and ensure we continue to advocate for our participants
- Elder care

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Support

- Support CALD communities
- Support CALD community
- Support to CALD & vulnerable people
- CALD carers
- Limited Spanish speaking community groups for seniors
- More advocacy for CALD communities

System Navigation

- Assist clients with My Aged Care navigation
- Assisting clients to navigate aged care services and receive aged care assessments
- Supporting the elder with My Age Care package and making sure the service provider are delivering the right support at the elder's expectation

What support would assist your organisation and/or the broader industry to meet these priorities?

Sector and Workforce Sustainability

Additional support for small organisations
Gap in support available between NDIS and My Aged Care
Not enough resources to meet the demand
Resources
Resourcing
Shortage of CHSP services
Staffing
Staffing and resources
Sustainability
Overwhelm of teams who are dealing with aged care system that is more complicated than previously [was]; worker sector exit risk
Overload of work
Constant trainings
Demand for services exceeds capacity allowed by funding
Lack of CHSP service providers with service capacity for older people
Lack of practical support and certainty from Government
We need to support carers to register for our program; they are overwhelmed by information in the My Aged Care and NDIS worlds and don't look at Carer Gateway support for themselves

Funding

Funding
Funding
Monitoring Minimum Service Offer (MSO) and FSO funding updates and managing those changes
The allocation of the 10% case management funds are insufficient to provide quality and person-centred care to all SAH clients
CHSP - funding exhausted, release more funding

Improving Wait Times

Team is overwhelmed with longer waiting periods for clients
It's very difficult for elderly people to wait for 8-10 months for their funding;
it demoralises them especially at ages above 80
Longer wait times for assessments, understanding complex procedures
Participants are stuck as they are on wait lists not just for their Home Care
Packages but also for assessments and re-assessments
Wait times for assessments and putting support in place at home for elders
Wait times on residential care
Waiting list on packages
Waiting times & the frustration our elders feel because of that
Waiting times which affect our elders a great deal
Waiting times for SAH funding and cost cuts for NDIS participants
Supporting the elderly why they are waiting to be assessed for their My Age
Care package
Using our support and resources while elders wait for support at home
package
Support at Home - resolve excessive waitlists and stop releasing 60% value
packages

Safe Practices

NDIS system allows criminal/ fraud access and genuine providers wearing
blame - genuine NDIS participants funding cuts
Too many unethical providers in NDIS; re-educating participants when they
transition to compliant provider what is allowed under funding and
breaking the cycle of unethical practices
Working out the fine line between if the elder is being financially controlled
by the care or if they [are] allowing them to do due to be worried about not
[being] alone

System Reforms and Education

Assisting clients to transition from CHSP to SaH - clients choosing to stick with CHSP due to contributions

Complex schemes

Concerns or Issues raised due the new changes in the sector

How can we continue to provide CHSP services when the SSSV referral code ends 30th June 2026?

Trying to explain the new model - SAH to CALD communities

Needing more free training and information; can't afford it

Cut the contribution for SAH

Good digital systems

Navigating individual vendor agreements with SAH providers with different conditions - can you provide a generic one please

CHSP - extend as [there is] no confidence people can continue to access services needed if combined with Support at Home

